



Progressive Discipline



Policy Statement

Marywood University endorses a progressive discipline policy designed to promote resolution in a fair and orderly manner. This policy applies to faculty members with tenure or whose terms of appointment have not yet expired. Its objectives support the collegial relationships at Marywood University and are directed toward continual institutional improvement. Because the University regards disciplinary action as corrective and not punitive, the policy recognizes personal and professional problems that may be rectified by an informal educational process, as well as serious violations of professional responsibilities implicating possible recommendation for suspension or dismissal.

The policy is intended to provide an effective and flexible means of identifying problem areas, resolving complaints, and preventing repetitive incidents by prompt intervention and assistance. It is designed to accomplish these ends by a series of gradual steps involving strategies such as personal conferences, oral and written warnings, and opportunities for monitored assistance where applicable.

Procedures

Commencement. Disciplinary action may be initiated by a complaint, oral or written, which alleges violation of institutional policy, practice, procedure or other functions and responsibilities of the faculty member in pursuing his or her customary teaching and institutional role. The complaint, which may reflect an incident or incidents of misconduct or deficiency, may be communicated to the faculty member's immediate supervisor or to the appropriate dean.

Meeting with Administrator. The administrator receiving the complaint shall discuss the matter with the faculty member in a confidential conference. If additional information from the faculty member provides a satisfactory explanation, the decision may be to close the matter then. If, however, additional light is not shed on the allegation or an explanation is not satisfactory, the administrator will specify corrective action to be taken, and the discussion will constitute an oral warning.

Written Warning. If the alleged problem continues or additional complaints are received, the immediate supervisor or dean must notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who shall conduct a preliminary investigation concerning the merits of the complaint. A written warning to the faculty member may follow where circumstances indicate that the problem is not resolved. The written warning will become a part of the faculty member's personnel file, but will be expunged after three years if no other written warnings have occurred.

Suspension. The faculty member may be suspended by the Vice President for Academic Affairs at any time during the proceedings involving him or her. Suspension is justified if immediate harm to the faculty member or others is threatened by the person's continuance in the faculty position. Unless in direct violation of the law, any

such suspension should be with pay.

Special Assistance. In those circumstances where it is evident that the faculty member is in need of special professional assistance, the Vice President for Academic Affairs may require in writing any of the following remedial actions:

- counseling and/or another type of treatment program, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous;
- psychological counseling and/or treatment, including out-patient treatment prescribed by a duly credentialed and qualified professional;
- peer faculty monitoring to assist in resolving work-related performance problems;
- a specified number of periodic conferences with the faculty member's Dean to assist in resolving administrative or institutional problems.

Special professional assistance will be for a specific period of time. Where the assistance necessitates in-patient treatment or time away from teaching, that temporary time-off shall be with pay. During the period of assistance, the faculty member shall communicate weekly or at other intervals specified by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who shall monitor the faculty member's progress to determine when and if the special assistance has achieved its objective. Part of this monitoring function may involve the faculty member providing summary statements from treatment providers regarding compliance and prognosis. If the faculty member has refused to participate, or the remedial objective has not been reached during the specified period of time, a recommendation to terminate employment may be made to the President of the University.

Dismissal

If remedial actions(s) taken during the suspension does not sufficiently resolve the issues that lead to the suspension, the university may move towards dismissal of the faculty member.

Ad Hoc Faculty Committee

Faculty members have the right to convene an ad hoc committee in order to appeal either a decision to suspend the faculty member or a decision to dismiss the faculty member.

- Having received a written recommendation for either suspension or dismissal from the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President of the University sends a written communication to the faculty member, stating with reasonable particularity the basis for suspension or dismissal and offering, if requested by the faculty member within 10 days, to convene a tenured faculty ad hoc committee to consider the matter, to render confidential advice, and thereby to effect a remedy if possible.
- Should the faculty member request a review by an ad hoc committee, it shall consist of three members selected in the following order: (a) one tenured faculty member selected by the person seeking assistance, and (2) two tenured faculty members selected by the Executive Council of the Faculty Senate. The choice of members should be on the basis of their objectivity and competence and of the regard in which they are held in the academic community. The President of the University or his/her delegate has the option of attending the meetings of the Committee. Should a faculty member request that such a committee be convened twice (i.e., once for suspension and once for dismissal), the membership of the committee may be similar or different, a determination which is made by the President of the University in consultation with the faculty member and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Normally the committee would make its

recommendation within 30 days of being convened.

- The Committee elects its own Chair, who sends the opinion of the committee in writing to the President of the University, copied to the faculty member and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the opinion of the Faculty Committee is that the matter is successfully resolved or that there is no merit to the complaint, a recommendation shall be made to discontinue proceedings. If the problem has not been corrected and reason still exists to question the fitness of the faculty member, the recommendation shall be to either continue a suspension or initiate a formal action toward dismissal.

Publicity. Public statements by the faculty member or others about possible or actual termination of employment should be avoided.

Related Policies

- [Teaching Responsibility](#)
- [Librarianship Responsibility](#)
- [Tenure](#)
- [Faculty Status](#)
- [Academic Workload](#)

History

07/01/89 - Reaffirmed with publication of Faculty Manual

12/12/97 - Addition of informal process approved by the President of the University as recommended by the Policy Committee of the University

07/01/03 - Editorial changes made to reflect academic restructuring

10/12/11 - Revision approved by the President of the University as recommended by the Policy Committee of the University

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